

567 of their ancestors. Ahaggar slaves are perfectly adapted to the desert and possess physical qualities of sobriety much superior to those of their racial brothers /170/ in the Sudan, who have difficulty living there when they are transported from the Sudan.

The Akli is subject to forced labor at the will of his master. He owes all his work to his master and is his property, but he receives a few advantages and can use a few days of work a week for himself.

In the Ahaggar the Iklan are treated perfectly well by their masters, to whom they are quite attached. They share meals with them and sustain with an even temper the good or bad fortune which the camp enjoys. Their children are reared with those of the Tuareg and on the same footing.

They benefit from certain humanitarian rules which do credit to the Tuareg. Thus a slave who is too young or too old cannot be liberated and must be supported by his master.

[428] The Iklan are bequeathed as a heritage; they may be possessors of animals, whose usufruct they then have; but upon their death these animals fall to their masters and not to their own children.

567 The Imochar, Inislimen, and Imrad have all rights over their slaves. The latter cannot marry without their consent. Generally, 582 when there are a man slave and a woman slave in the same camp, they are married to each other, and the man receives a goat which 583 he gives to his wife as a bride price. If the slave wants to seek a wife for himself and finds one in another camp, he receives nothing from his master and must find the means to pay his wife's bride price by himself; this bride price is commonly fixed at ten goats. The slaves put in charge of keeping the flocks and who are often absent from the camp because of their occupation usually do not marry. [836] "They take their pleasure where they find it," said Father de Foucauld.

565 The Tuareg often take slave women as concubines. There are 567 several advantages to this: first, they have no bride price to pay, 585

517 meal, which is taken very late, and more rarely after the meal if
 521 it is to entertain a stranger. Everyone sits in a circle. Each per-
 571 son takes a place in the order of his arrival, in such a way as to
 533 alternate men and women. When everyone has arrived, they elect
 a male president and a female president, whose job is to see that
 the usages and customs of the ahal are respected and, as a joke,
 /289/ to inflict forfeits on those who bring on themselves the
 recriminations of the others. Sometimes only a female president
 is elected, but never a male president alone.

[574] The presence of several girls in a camp is often sufficient
 cause for organizing an ahal mixed with asri. The young men
 come from neighboring camps, always dressed in their dressy
 clothes. Some of them sometimes come hundreds of kilometers
 to attend a meeting where they know they will find pretty girls
 and pleasant distraction. Then one of those present plays the
 violin. The sourish, plaintive, monotonous sounds which come out
 of it are quite in harmony with the wild setting made by nature
 and man. The men accentuate the rhythm by singing "ho ho"
 on the beat and finally by a hummed accompaniment. And every-
 538 one jokes and tells broad stories, for the poetic part is often of a
 523 very doubtful quality, if not made up of more or less vulgar
 repartee.

Then the violin is silent, and laughter bursts out on all sides.

[832] Men and women make very free contacts and rub noses which is
 the peculiar form of the Tuareg kiss. These meetings end very late
 at night, and everyone returns to his camp, not, however, without
 having made an appointment by a special language of hand gestures
 to finish these amorous love feasts in a more intimate way.

- 836 The mores of the girls are indeed very licentious, so much so
 that Father de Foucault stated that the word "virginity" did not
 exist in Tamashek. (1) "There is no question of keeping the girl

1. Dr. Vermale, Au Sahara
pendant la guerre européenne
 /In the Sahara During the European
 War/, p. 172.

826 pure until her marriage," said Dr. Vermale elsewhere. "Those are sentiments which the Tuareg do not understand. Thus, as soon as she is nubile, she goes to the ahal and it is not long before she is deflowered. Virginity does not exist and has no representative value in the eyes of the Tuareg." (2) Indeed, the women are

2. Op. cit., p. 171.

more or less easy. Some give themselves to the first comer; others grant their favors to only a small group of friends. To grant them only to a single person, however, would be judged in very bad taste and a sign of perversion.

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[854] No one finds fault with their free mores, on the condition that they let themselves be courted only by men of a social condition equal to their own. Some women let themselves be courted by slaves and that is considered a shame for them.

842 /290/ One may be astonished that unwed mothers are not more numerous with such dissolute mores. Contraception is commonly used, and, as Dr. Foley said, effusio seminis inter crura is probably the frequent conclusion of the nocturnal rendezvous after the ahal. (1) These restrictive measures must not be unre-

1. Moeurs et médecine des
Touaregs de l'Ahaggar / Ahaggar
Tuareg Mores and Medicine/

p. 56.

lated to the low birth rate of the Tuareg, and it is quite possible that the married Tuareg woman continues to practice them.

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[847] Bearing children out of wedlock and bastardy (agama) are the object of public discredit. The Tuareg rarely practice abortion, but infanticides used to be quite numerous, and no one thought of being offended by them. When a woman finds herself pregnant

The men leave, the women go back into the tents, but the fortunate ones who have succeeded by means of assiduous courtship to touch the heart of their love, will soon come back secretly or will go to the place which has been appointed for them. Let us draw a veil!...

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One might wonder what can become of the virtue of young girls with such customs. Almost always it has gone up in the air. But a Tuareg will not pay attention to this detail when it is a matter of getting married. He knows with what to be content: he has often profited by it. It is all the same to him.

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The ahal is one of the reasons for late marriages among the Tuareg. Marriage requires expenditures upon which one does not decide until one has been able to acquire a little means, and that is why it is not unusual among the Tuareg to see men marry at the age of forty. With all he finds to entertain him, the Tuareg does not feel the need to get married. This does not mean that many do not marry around twenty-five, but in general a man marries quite late.

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Farther on, in the little collection of songs, will appear the qualities which a man must have in order to succeed at the ahal, as well as the kind of songs which are sung there. /Not translated:/ /11/

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Chapter V

The Role of the Woman in Tuareg Society

At every step one sees the influence of the woman in Tuareg society. In Tuareg history, the inheritance, the life, the thought, and the behavior, everywhere her influence is felt.

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In the matter of history, it is from her that the Tuareg says he is descended. Thus the nobles of the Ahaggar will tell

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861 /140 cont./ The child has never been able to have his way in his parents' camp; he has always had to bow to the canouns; if, by chance, he was disobedient, his parents did not hesitate to use corporal punishment -- a few slaps, nothing more; for a more serious fault or for the repetition of an offense, he would find himself tied up like a young goat and condemned to stay in the tent. However, punishments are the exception; a word, a look, suffices. It is not at all good, the Tuareg say, to beat children too much. This training gives the young Targui a proud character, an acute sense of his dignity, and a sometimes disquieting reserve. Absolute obedience to custom makes it necessary to lead a moral life which is perhaps more rigid than a religion could make it. To know a Targui and to predict his behavior is very difficult for a Frenchman, who must sort out what is individual from what comes from the constraint exercised by Tuareg society and then must take into account the coloring that Islam gives to the whole.

● 836 Soon the time comes when the young Targui may go to the tendi and ahals. It is necessary to say here a few words on sexual problems.

Certain stories have greatly exaggerated the freedom of morals among the Tuareg. The training of the boys, which keeps them very often out of the company of adults, and that of the girls, which ties them to their mother and obliges them to be modest, does not predispose to license.

836 There is no sexual education properly speaking; for a very long time the young girl is ignorant of everything concerning conception. 864 Casually, thanks to an older girl companion, she learns the essentials of intimate relations between men and women. The young man is initiated much sooner, for he may easily leave the camp; enlightened by his comrades, he wastes no time in starting an affair with a Negress of the neighborhood. The sexual customs are transmitted in conversations /141/ among the young Tuareg and are observed

836 /141 cont./ as are the other customs; there is one very
864 interesting one, the respect for the Tuareg girl. Contrary to
a commonly held opinion, the young girl about to be married
is always a virgin (physically) among the nobles and nearly
always one among the imrads.

839 In their first youth, the Tuareg behave as do all the
children of the world; they practice solitary masturbation,
girls and boys using procedures characteristic of the country.
786 The first amorous relations between Tuareg girls and boys
take place after celebrations. It is well to describe these
celebrations, for accounts of the famous "courts of love"
have been much exaggerated.

[534] We have seen that the Tuareg organize a tendi on the
occasion of a family ceremony. The tendi takes its name
from the instrument used, the large wooden mortar over which
is stretched a skin which has been dampened previously.
The women gather around the tendi, and one or two beat
out traditional rhythms on the skin, which resonates dully.
One of the women chants an endless series of couplets while
her companions mark the measure by clapping hands and take
up the refrain in chorus. The songs evoke past combats as
well as recent events; they vaunt the merits of a camel or
those of a person; some are improvised. Widows, divorced
women, and young girls take part in the tendi, but married
women, with the permission of their husbands, also go. A
woman leaves the tendi if one of her parents approaches it.

The songs continue, accompanied by the tom-tom; the
men then come to sit behind the singers, listen, and also
sing. Each hugs his female companion next to him, but
hardly passes the limits of a public flirtation. The tendi
continues late into the night while the old people sleep in
the tents.

526 In the daytime the tendi is the indispensable accompani-
ment of the ilougan, which may be defined as "a tournament
on camel back."